

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-03 AID-05 OMB-01 CIEP-01 CIAE-00

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BG, IZ, UN, US

SUBJECT: MUJIB COMMENTS ON TRIP

1. PRESS PREPORTS OF PRIME MINISTER'S AIRPORT COMMENTS FOLLOWING RETURN FROM TWO-WEEK TRIP TO NEW YORK, WASHINGTON AN BAGHDAD SUGGEST THAT SHEIKH MUJIB IS GIVING WASHINGTON VISIT SECOND BILLING TO IRAQ TRIP. DESCRIBING HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH U.S. OFFICIALS AS "SOMEWHAT"OR "PARTIALLY" SUCCESSFUL, HE TERMED IRAQ TRIP, WHICH RESULTED IN PLEDGE OF \$51 MILLION IN LOANS AND GRANTS TO BDG (SEPTTEL), "VERY SUCCESSFUL." HE DESCRIBED HIS VISIT TO UNGA AS "GOOD FOR BANGLADESH IN MANY RESECTS

COMMENTING SPECIFICALLY ON HIS WASHINGTON STAY, MUJIB SAID HE HELD "WIDE RANGING" TALKS WITH PRESIDENT FORD RUND SECRETARY KISSINGER, AND DESCRIBED THE US LEADERS AS SYMPATHETIC TOWARD BANGLADESH. THE USG, MUJIB SAID, HAD PROMISED TO PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL 100,000 TONS OF FOOD GRAINS BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR, IN ADDITION TO THE 150,000 TONS ALREADY COMMITTED.

2. MUJIB'S LOW-KEYED COMMENTS ON HIS VISIDTO WASHINGTON

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WERE IN SHARP CONTRAST TO TONE OF EXPECTATION SET BY

PRESS COVERAGE HERE DURING THE COURSE OF THE VISIT. PRESS THEMES WERE THAT MUJIB, WITHOUT ANY SACRIFICE TO SOVEREIGNTY OF BANGLADESH OR TO ITS NONALIGNED FOREIGN POLICY, HAD CONVINCED PRESIDENT FORD OF THE DIRE NEEDS OF THE COUNTRY AND THAT CONSEQUENTLY THE USG HAD AGREED TO DO ALL IT COULD TO AID BANGLADESH, PROMISING BOTH SHORT AND LONG-TERM ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. THIS PRESS COVERAGE PARALLELED ATTITUDE OF MANY BENGALLEES WHO PERSIST IN SEEING THE VISIT AS MARKING A DRAMATIC CHANGE IN BANGLADESH-U.S. RELATIONS. EVEN RELATIVELY SOPHISTICATED BENGALLEES TAKE THE SIMPLISTIC VIEW THAT ONLY THE UNITED STATES IS WEALTHY ENOUGH TO SAVE BANGLADESH AND THAT THE USG CANNOT HELP BUT PROVIDE, FOR HUMANITARIAN IF NOT FOR UNREALISTICALLY PERCEIVED "STRATEGIC" REASONS, MASSIVE ASSISTANCE TO BOLSTER THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMY.

3. WHETHER MUJIB'S MODERATE COMMENTS WILL SERVE TO DAMPEN SUCH EXAGGERATED VIEWS WE WILL BE ABLE TO JUDGE BETTER AFTER WE HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE VISIT WITH BDG OFFICIALS.
BOSTER

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